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No. 68

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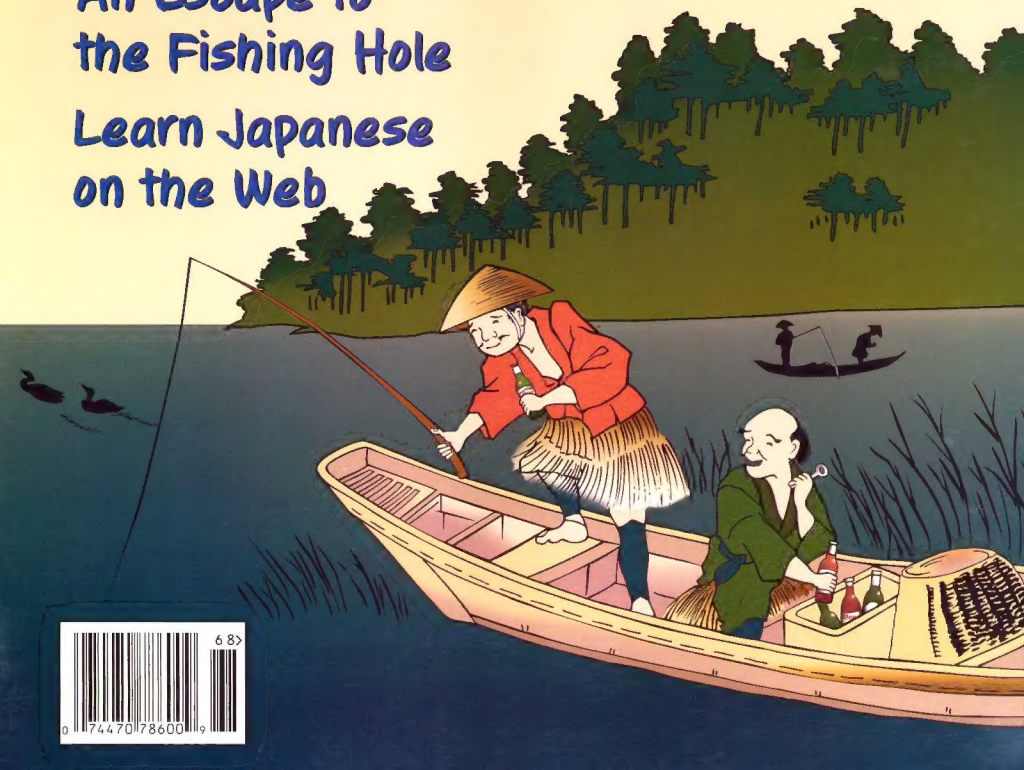

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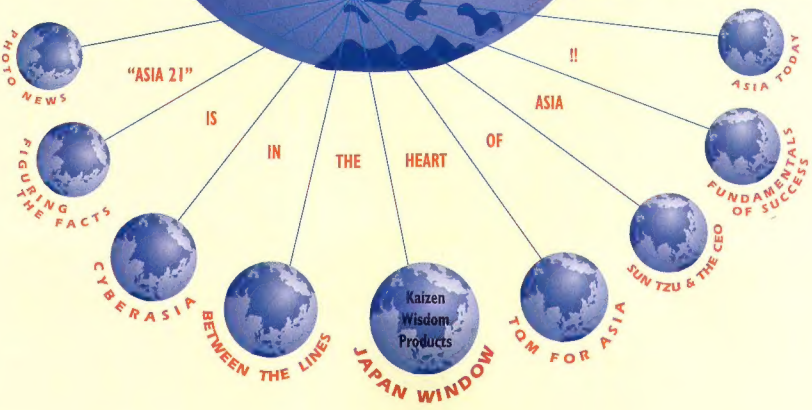

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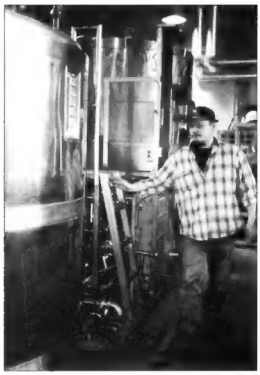

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Mangajin is a made-up word combining *manga* ("comics/cartoons") and *jin* ("person/people"). It sounds almost like the English word "magazine" as rendered in Japanese—*magajin*. All of the Japanese manga in *Mangajin* were created in Japan, by Japanese cartoonists, for Japanese readers.

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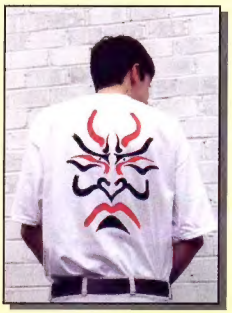

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So we can't really say that *Mangajin* is "brought to you by" our advertisers, but they certainly play a major part in getting out the magazine and allowing us to produce the best publication possible.

In this issue, we welcome three new "sponsors"—Asahi Beer (page 1), Hakushika Sake (page 63), and Kikkoman soy sauce (page 16). This seems like a great combination of products to promote in *Mangajin*—the average age of our readers is 36, and we know that they not only eat at Japanese restaurants frequently, they also prepare Japanese food at home. Japanese beer and sake are natural accompaniments to Japanese food, and *shōyu* (soy sauce) is indispensable on the Japanese table. In addition, most of our readers are interested (at least to some extent) in the Japanese language, so they are better equipped to remember and pronounce Japanese brand names.

Many of our advertisers continue to advertise with us because they see tangible and immediate results from their ads—language-learning and software products are in this category. But if *Mangajin*'s readers responded enough to the Asahi and Hakushika ads to have an immediate, noticeable effect on sales, they would be too hungover to read the magazine, and we don't want that. Likewise, a little soy sauce goes a long way, so Kikkoman is not likely to see an immediate bump in sales as a result of their ad. It would certainly be nice, however, if some of the readers would drop a note to these sponsors to express your support for the people who support *Mangajin*.

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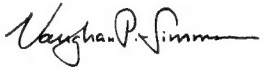
For our part, we will make further efforts to provide you with an even better magazine. For example, there seems to be growing interest in J-pop music and Japanese animation, and in the next issue we will start running regular features on those areas.



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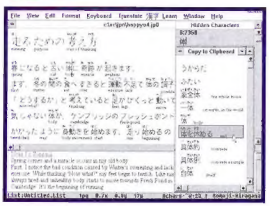

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LETTERS

Letters to the Editor

Mangajin *welcomes comments by letter, fax, or e-mail, although we reserve the right to edit for clarity or length. Please address correspondence to: Editor, P.O. Box 77188, Atlanta, GA 30357 (Editor@Mangajin.com).*
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"The Japanese"

"*Honto ka na?*" [*Mangajin* No. 66] made my Japanese friends and me chuckle to death!

While reading this outlandish but truthful manga, I found myself wondering if the use of "the Japanese" is correct in all situations. Here are some concrete examples: "The Japanese use salt for ritual purification," "The Japanese trust abacuses," "The Japanese are mad about education, and they start teaching their children from the instant they're born," etc.

The excessive use of "the Japanese" (not "some Japanese," or "most Japanese") is often disturbing, misleading, and even offensive to *some* Japanese. As Mark Petersen has pointed out in his *Zoku-Nihonjin-no-Eigo* (published by Iwanami), "it is the American media's bias to refer to other peoples by putting the definite article 'the' before non-American nationalities such as Russians, Iranians, Mexicans, Arabs, Cambodians, etc. Some American journalists and publishers assume (unconsciously, of course) that non-Americans should be treated as one 'unit' (which does not consist of individuals)."

Quite true! "*Some* Japanese trust abacuses," "*some* Japanese use salt for ritual purification, and perhaps "*most* Japanese are mad about education," etc. I know stereotyping is one of the ingredients of manga, but sometime we need to be extremely careful about the use of "the Japanese."

Mori Ryoji
Redding, CA

Your point is well taken, but the goal of the manga in question is to make fun of American misperceptions of Japan. In other words, the writer was making fun of the very tendency you mention—to categorize all Japanese as being the same.

Actually, one of the things that we feel Mangajin *does very well is to expose stereotypes. In most of the manga stories we publish (stories that were written in Japan, by Japanese artists, for consumption by Japanese readers), we are showing Japanese people who do not fit the stereotypical images (held even by some Japanese).*

No fan of *chapatsu*

And so it happened again. Japan is once more under attack from the air. Only this time it's not bombers, but storms of winged bovines dropping a different kind of ordnance upon the hapless heads of the populace. That's why *chapatsu* [茶髪, "tea-colored hair," featured in *Mangajin* No. 66] is a bit of a misnomer. *Funpatsu* [糞髪, "feces-colored hair"] is more like it—in more ways than one if you think about the effort and money (奮発) spent to sustain this slightly perverse and grotesque travesty. It's hard to believe that the actresses sporting the tawdry look of lifeless and brassy hair are the same arresting beauties shown in the sheer glory of their ethnic charm

(continued on page 31)

Websites of the moment

The Japan Ring is a series of individual webpages with one thing in common: Japan. Each site is linked to the next, and eventually surfers can navigate themselves around the ring back to the homepage. Contains both English-only and Japanese-only sites, but no abusive or offensive content is accepted by the ringmaster.

http://www.geocities.com/Tokyo/7210/japanlink.htm

BLOOPERS

Reading Difficulties

My primary responsibilities as an assistant English teacher on the JET Program involve teaching at seven junior high schools. Luckily, my students wear name badges (in Japanese), but it's sometimes difficult for me to read them.

One day, I asked for volunteers to answer a question. One boy raised his hand and I peered at his name badge: 新田. A new name, but not new kanji for me, so putting the two together, I said, "OK, Shinda-*kun*."

The whole class burst out laughing, including my teaching partner, who said, "No, no. It's Nitta-*kun*! Nitta-*kun*!" It took me a few seconds to realize I had called the poor boy "Mr. Dead." (*Shin* is a common reading for the kanji 新, but when paired with 田 as a name, it is pronounced "*ni*"—*Nitta*. *Shinda* 死んだ is a past form of *shinu*, "die.")

Tim Cosgrove
Kyoto-fu, Japan

After six months of daily Japanese language study, I was ready for a break. My mind had turned to jelly, but I had learned Japanese. And, of course, everyone said I spoke like a native. Naively taking it for fact, I sauntered up to the local Hoka-Hoka Bentō shop to buy dinner one night. Thinking I would really impress her with my impeccable Japanese, I asked the cute college girl working the counter for the Mixed Lunch set: "*Mikkusu unchi o-hitotsu kudasai.*" To which the cute girl and her four cute coworkers burst into uncontrollable laughter.

It wasn't until the next morning that I realized that I had mistaken the katakana ラ (*ra*) in *ranchi* for the hiragana う (*u*) and very confidently asked for "Mixed Poop." Needless to say, I have not returned to that HokaHoka Bentō since.

Daniel Gilchrist
Chiba-ken, Japan

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back to the BASICS

In reader surveys over the years, *Mangajin*'s *Basic Japanese* column has consistently been voted the most popular part of the magazine. (Check out the *Basic Japanese* in this issue to see why!)

Back in 1993, we compiled those popular *Basic Japanese* columns from the first 24 issues in book form, and called it *Basic Japanese Through Comics*. Thousands of readers have found it to be a wonderfully entertaining way to gain greater cultural and linguistic insights. It has proved popular with business people as well as students and teachers—fans range from hard-core Japanophiles to those whose interest is only casual.

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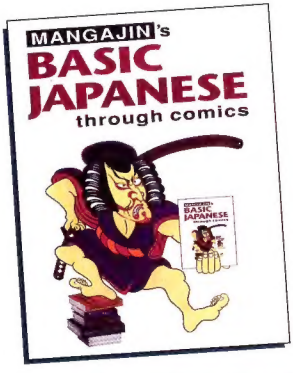

Part 2 picks up where *Part 1* left off, bringing you all the *Basic Japanese* columns from issues No. 25-48 of *Mangajin* magazine. If you liked *Part 1*, here's your chance to get even more of *Mangajin*'s unique presentation of Japanese language and culture.

If you haven't seen *Part 1*, take advantage of our special combined package price of only $24.95 for both volumes—a savings of almost $5.00.

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37. Slang & Colloquialisms (Part 1)
38. Slang & Colloquialisms (Part 2)
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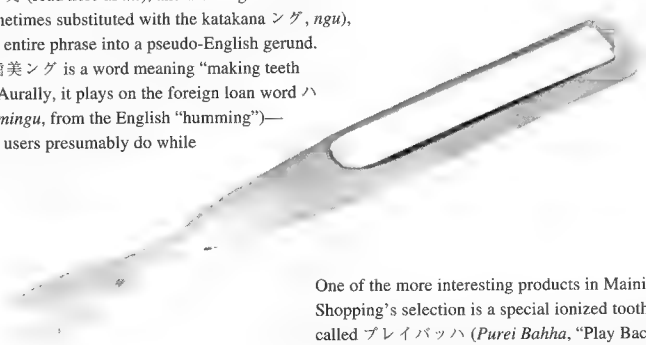
歯美*ing*
Hamingu

The *Mainichi Shinbun*, one of Japan's major daily newspapers, now has a shop-by-phone service called *Mainichi Daiyaru Shoppingu* ("Mainichi Dial Shopping"). It offers, among other things, a line of innovative dental-care products, and anyone who purchases one of these products gets a subscription to a newsletter called 歯美ング (*Hamingu*).

歯美ング uses the kanji for "tooth," 歯 (*ha*), the kanji for "beautiful," 美 (read here as *mi*), and the English suffix "-ing" (sometimes substituted with the katakana ング, *ngu*), to make the entire phrase into a pseudo-English gerund. Visually, 歯美ング is a word meaning "making teeth beautiful." Aurally, it plays on the foreign loan word ハミング (*hamingu*, from the English "humming")—what happy users presumably do while they brush.



If only Bach had had a Play Bach toothbrush . . .

One of the more interesting products in Mainichi Dial Shopping's selection is a special ionized toothbrush called プレイバッハ (*Purei Bahha*, "Play Bach"). The odd name comes from the fact that it plays a Bach minuet while being used. Not only is the music supposed to make brushing more pleasant, but it also indicates that the positively charged ions in the toothbrush are actively attracting the negatively charged plaque ions away from the teeth. Aside from these advanced functions, Play Bach is a standard, manually-powered toothbrush. The unit, with five interchangeable brush heads, goes for ¥3,200.

Send us your examples of creative product names or slogans (with some kind of documentation). If we publish your example, we'll send you a *Mangajin* T-shirt. In case of duplicate entries, earliest postmark gets the shirt. BRAND NEWS, P.O. Box 77188, Atlanta, GA 30357-1188

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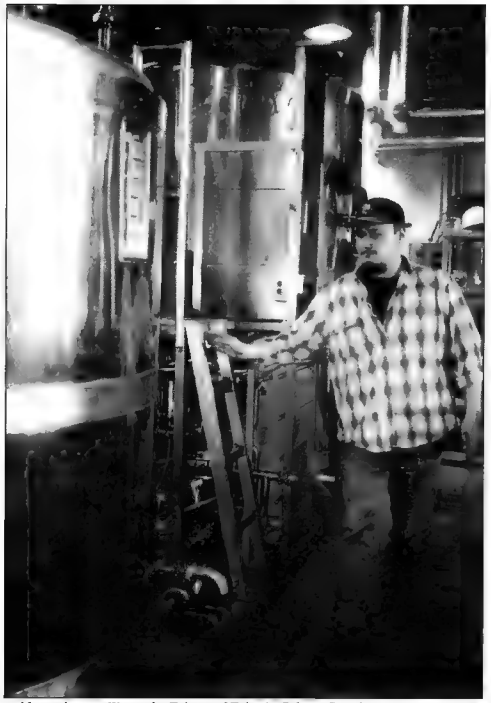

Master brewer Watanabe Takuya of Tokyo's Cabeza Grande once apprenticed at the Portland Brewing Company.

Japan discovers a new way to brew

Relaxed laws have allowed microbreweries to spring up in Japan, but some of the best craft brews are coming from the biggest companies.

by Bryan Harrell

Microbrewed beer is nothing new to beer drinkers in the US, but in Japan, beer from small producers is now big news. In the past three years, nearly 150 small breweries have opened up all over Japan, serving a variety of wheat beers, pale ales, German-style ales, stouts, and even a few fruit beers.

Until 1994, licenses to brew beer in Japan were only granted to those companies who could produce at least two million liters per year. This all but shut out entry-level, small producers and made it virtually impossible to have a brewpub, an establishment where people can enjoy beer brewed right on the premises. The result of this practice was the "Big Four Plus One" brewing industry—Asahi, Kirin, Sapporo, and Suntory with the relatively tiny Orion brewery in Okinawa turning out beer primarily for their home market.

The 1994 regulation change, however, spawned a new expression, *ji-biiru* (地ビール), which is derived from *jizake* (地酒), itself a relatively new expression for "gourmet" saké brewed by small "boutique" producers. Although people often call this "local sake," the fact is that most of it winds up in pricy *jizake senmonten* (専門店, "specialty stores") in Tokyo, Osaka, and other major cities for the enjoyment of well-heeled city people longing for the quieter countryside.

Much the same thing can be said for Japanese *ji-biiru.* Although this beer is often made in small towns, it is almost always impossible to find in stores in the town where it is produced. Most of it is consumed at the brewery, which will usually include a large restaurant with an overdone German motif, its menu featuring sausages, potatoes, grilled meat, and more sausages.

This is why I am reluctant to call Japanese microbrew *ji-biiru* and instead call it *yūenchi biiru* (遊園地ビール, "amusement-park beer"), because the breweries and restaurants are actually tourist destinations created with the hope of revitalizing the tired economies of small, rural towns facing declining populations and employment prospects.

When *ji-biiru* is kegged or bottled, it usually ends up in the trendier areas of the big cities, partly because cosmopolitan urbanites are into trying something

new—perhaps because they've tasted craft beer on vacation or assignment in Europe or North America, but mostly because Japanese microbrew is among the most expensive on the planet and requires a high income level to drink it regularly.

While a small bottle of mass-produced Asahi, Kirin, Sapporo, or Suntory costs ¥225 (that's $12 a six-pack, folks) due to Japan's massive ($2 per liter) beer tax, the fancy ales from Japanese microbreweries cost two to three times as much. That's if you can find it, because the Big Four wield so much clout in the distribution system that it's hard for small producers to get *ton'ya* (問屋, "distributors") and *sakaya* (酒屋, "liquor stores") to take their products. Thirsty beer lovers lucky enough to stumble on a few varieties of Japanese microbrews, usually in the liquor sections of major urban department stores, will end up paying somewhere around $30 for the privilege of taking home a six-pack.

So is Japanese microbeer worth the price? For those in the US accustomed to an astonishing variety of microbrews at increasingly competitive prices, the answer is no. In fact, the general level of brewing skills at Japanese microbreweries is astonishingly low, which is not surprising since home brewing is still illegal in Japan, whereas in the US it has long been the brewing college of hard knocks for many who are now working in microbreweries.

Since the early 1990s, however, there has been a slow but steady increase in home brewing, leading to the emergence of the interesting homonym *ji-biiru* (自ビール, literally "self-beer")—beer that you make yourself. Although in Japan it's illegal to home brew a beverage containing more than one percent alcohol, it's not illegal to sell the ingredients to enable one to do so. While there's only one full-blown homebrew supply shop in Japan (The Beer Club of Japan in Kobe, which sells by mail), cans of hopped malt extract (ビールの素, *biiru no moto*) are increasingly seen in discount stores and do-it-yourself shops.

The actual brewing chores at Tokyo's TY Harbor Brewery are handled by the Cabeza Grande brew crew, headed by president Iwasaki Ichiro (left), master brewer Watanabe Takuya (center and opposite), and apprentice Abe Kazu.

There's even an underground newsletter for homebrewers, the *Homebrew Tsūshin* (ホームブルー通信), with pithy articles on making a variety of alcoholic beverages written by people with often hilarious pseudonyms. Here, terminology can be a problem because since homebrewing in Japan is both new and illicit, there's no standard vocabulary for it. While *bakuga* (麦芽) means "malt" in Japanese, most everyone is using the word *moruto* (モルト). Hops are *hoppu* (ホップ) and yeast is *iisuto* (イースト), though older homebrewers seem more comfortable with the word *kōbo* (酵母), which is what saké brewers call their yeast. Interestingly enough, the older Japanese word for beer (麦酒) has two pronunciations—*bakushu* and *mugishu*—but one seldom hears either in conversation these days.

Still, the common US pattern of an award-winning home brewer landing a job at a microbrewery doesn't exist in Japan, partly because homebrewing competitions are held in secret, and partly because the average Japanese person is reluctant to give up a secure job for the questionable security of a brewing position in a new industry.

This is why several larger microbreweries have brought "braumeisters" over from Germany, together with the brewing equipment. Currently, there are nearly 20 German brewers working here and there in Japan, and they meet periodically to swap stories and recipes for beer which suits the Japanese taste.

Despite the overall low level of quality in Japanese microbrews, there are a few stars in the industry producing great beers. Japan's first operating microbrewery, the Echigo Brauhaus in Niigata, was founded by an Uehara Seiichirō, a fourth-generation saké brewer, and produces a number of excellent American West-Coast-style ales which are often found in Tokyo during the winter months, most likely because heavy Niigata snowfalls keep the tour

ALL PHOTOS BY MARK HARRISON

At this year's Brewtex Exhibition near Tokyo, Japan's handful of American beer entrepreneurs—including Michael Khoo (left) of Microbeers International, and Phred Kaufman (right, with assistant Ueno Daisaku in the center) of Ezo Beer—displayed their wares.

buses away from the brewery.

In Tokyo, the TY Harbor Brewery is pouring beer of rapidly increasing quality. Owned by the Terada Soko warehouse company, the brewery itself is operated by Iwasaki Ichirō ("call me Chuck"), who spent ten years in California training under the well-known "Buffalo Bill" Owens, who started California's first brewpub over 15 years ago. Iwasaki's company, Cabeza Grande, was named after the "big, rocky head" he aims for in every beer he produces. The Echigo brewhouse was also set up by Cabeza Grande, which continues to offer consulting services and operation contracts to companies that are starting up microbreweries in Japan.

Some of the best and most consistent microbrew-style beers in Japan, however, are being created by the well-trained Japanese brewers of the Big Four:

- In 1990, Suntory established an experimental microbrewery within its Musashino Brewery just outside of Tokyo, and since then this little setup has turned out an impressive array of interesting beers, albeit in very small quantities and with extremely limited distribution to select restaurants operated by Suntory. Earlier this year they produced an outstanding amber ale named Red Sky, which rivaled Bass Pale Ale in flavor and Guinness for its incredibly dense and creamy head.
- Sapporo operates a pub brewery within its Kawaguchi complex north of Tokyo, offering an impressive variety of mostly German-style lagers, the most memorable of which is the dark and rich Meisterbock, a high-test Bavarian-style dopplebock with eight percent alcohol.
- Kirin operates the Spring Valley Brewing Company adjacent to its huge brewing complex in Namamugi (between Kawasaki and Yokohama). Spring Valley has a seasonal rotation of well-crafted beers, mostly lagers in the German brewing tradition. Interestingly, the original founder of Spring Valley (which later became Kirin) was an American named Copeland who lived in Yokohama in the late 19th century and brewed ales instead of lagers.
- Asahi has brewed a few limited edition craft-style beers in the last five years which have been found in a few Asahi-run restaurants. Their most recent offering, Kohaku-no-Toki, tasted like a lighter version of Bass Pale Ale, which Asahi exclusively imports. However, their mass-produced Asahi REDS, a reddish lager, and the more popular Asahi Kuronama (Black), a German-style dunkel, can be considered entry-level craftbrews due to the relative care in both ingredients and brewing.

Along with the growing interest in craft-brewed beers is an increase in beer imports. Americans Michael Khoo and Craig Tillman, living in Kanazawa, founded Microbeers International two years ago and now operate Japan's only American microbrew-of-the-month club. Each month, members receive two six-packs and a newsletter, the main story of which is written by yours truly.

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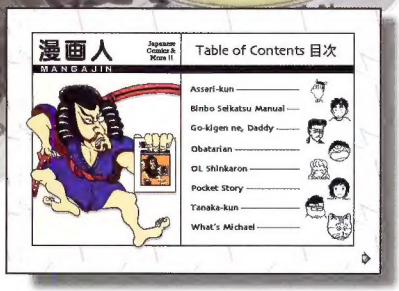

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- **Dai-Tokyo Binbo Seikatsu Manual**

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System Requirements:
Macintosh or Power Mac
System 7.0 or later
68030 CPU (68040 recommended)
4.5 MB RAM
CD-ROM drive (double speed recommended)
13" or larger color/grayscale monitor
– or –
Windows 3.1 or later
4.5 MB RAM
386/50MHz or greater (486 recommended)
640x480 8-bit color monitor
Sound card

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